

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Currently amended) An apparatus for bending a bar-like dough piece ~~having a~~ along its length into a predetermined form, said apparatus comprising:

conveying means for continuously conveying bar-like dough pieces thereon in traveling direction that is substantially orthogonal to ~~[[the]]~~ a length of each bar-like dough piece;

~~being means for bending each incoming bar like dough piece in symmetrically or asymmetrically with respect to the center of said length of said incoming bar like dough piece; and~~

~~means for substituting at least one of the relationships of the dispositions in said length of said bar like dough piece of said bending means and said incoming bar like dough piece with a predetermined position for them.~~

means for determining a plurality of actual positions to be bent on the length of each bar-like dough piece;

means for substituting said determined actual positions with predetermined positions; and

bending means for bending each bar-like dough piece at said predetermined positions that are symmetrical or asymmetrical with respect to the center of said length of said incoming bar-like dough piece into a predetermined form.

2. (Currently amended) The apparatus ~~as recited in~~ of claim 1, wherein said predetermined ~~position is~~ positions are determined so that said bending means

bends said incoming bar-like dough piece with a load substantially centrally located in the length of said bar-like dough piece.

3. (Currently amended) The apparatus ~~as recited in~~ of claim 2, wherein said predetermined ~~relative position is~~ positions are also determined so that said bending means bends said incoming bar-like dough piece with loads substantially symmetrically located with respect to the center of said bar-like dough piece, wherein said substantially symmetrically located loads are orientated inversely with respect to said substantially centrally located load.

4. (Currently amended) The apparatus ~~as recited in~~ of claim 3, wherein said bent dough piece takes substantially an M-shape.

5. (Currently amended) The apparatus ~~as recited in~~ of claim 1, wherein said predetermined ~~relative position is~~ positions are determined so that said bending means bends said incoming bar-like dough piece with a load located off-center with respect to the center of the length of said incoming bar-like dough piece.

6. (Currently amended) The apparatus ~~as recited in~~ of claim 5, wherein said predetermined ~~relative position is~~ positions are also determined so that said bending means bends said bar-like dough piece with loads asymmetrical with respect to the center of the length of said bar-like dough piece, wherein said asymmetrical loads are orientated inversely with respect to said substantially centrally located load.

7. (Currently amended) The apparatus ~~as recited in~~ of claim 6, wherein said predetermined form is substantially N-shaped.

8-17. (Cancelled).

18. (Currently amended) A method for bending a bar-like dough piece ~~having a~~ along its length into a predetermined form, said method comprising the steps of:

- a) continuously conveying bar-like dough pieces in a traveling direction that is substantially orthogonal to ~~[[the]]~~ a length of each bar-like dough piece;
 - b) determining a plurality of actual positions to be bent on the length of each bar-like dough piece;
 - c) substituting said determined actual positions with predetermined positions;
- and
- d) bending said bar-like dough piece at said predetermined positions that are symmetrical or asymmetrical with respect to the center of said length of said bar-like dough piece into a predetermined form.

19. (Currently amended) The method ~~as recited in~~ of claim 18, wherein said determining step includes a step ~~[[for]]~~ of determining the center of said length of said bar-like dough piece.

20. (Currently amended) The method ~~as recited in~~ of claim 18, wherein said determining step includes a step ~~[[for]]~~ of determining the length of said bar-like dough piece.

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS:

The attached sheet of drawing include a change to FIG. 3.

Attachments: Replacement Sheet(s): one sheet - FIG. 3
 [Annotated Sheet(s) showing changes: one sheet - FIG. 3]